

TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn 'Arabī (d. 638/1240), one of the most influential figures of Islamic mysticism, is also recognized as the greatest spiritual master. His influence in the development of Sufism is largely due to the articulation of mystical concepts and insights and the elaboration of complex spiritual disciplines often only alluded to by the Qur'ān and hadīth. Aside from his profound intellectual achievements, however, the honorific title, "the greatest master" (*al-Shaykh al-Akbar*) is on account of his unparalleled spiritual station, which has been ascertained through the accounts of various Sufi masters throughout history, having been confirmed on the basis of their own gnostic perception.

One of Ibn 'Arabī's most influential works is *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, which he reports to have received by the Prophet Muḥammad through a vision. For this reason, as well as the fact that it is considered the quintessence of his thought, it is the subject of over one hundred commentaries. He expounds in it various mystical doctrines as epitomized by a series of prophets beginning with Adam and ending with Muḥammad.

Among the numerous commentaries on the *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, the most famous are eminent works by Mu'ayyid al-Dīn Jandī (d. 700/1300), 'Abd al-Razzāq Kāshānī (d. 730/1330), 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (d. 898/1492) and Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī (d. 673/1274), whose commentary on the *Fuṣūṣ* is not exhaustive, although he is considered to be the greatest expositor of Ibn 'Arabī's works and the foremost of his students, and Sharaf al-Dīn Dā'ūd al-Qayṣarī (d. 751/1350).

In order to explore the teachings of Ibn 'Arabī, it is worthwhile to begin by examining the prolegomena to *Maṭla' khuṣūṣ al-kilam fī ma'ānī Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, Dā'ūd Qayṣarī's commentary on *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*. Although his commentary on the *Fuṣūṣ* represents the third in a direct line going back to Ibn 'Arabī through Kāshānī, Jandī and Qūnawī, it has been considered one of the most popular due to its thoroughness and accessibility, frequently synthesizing the ideas of his predecessors.

It may also be noteworthy that often a reading of the *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* with a qualified instructor in the traditional study circles is preceded by a complete and independent reading of Qayṣarī's Prolegomena, which, as mentioned, addresses some of the most important themes of Sufism. Often this is accompanied by a close reading of Ibn Turka's *Tamhīd al-Qawā'id*.¹ After the *Fuṣūṣ*, Qūnawī's *Miftāḥ al-ghayb* is studied and finally Ibn 'Arabī's *Futūḥāt al-Makkīyya*.²

The prolegomena, commonly known simply as the *Muqaddima*, although part of a larger work, which is the commentary on the *Fuṣūṣ*, stands on its own as an independent work and has been the subject of careful study. Moreover, since the *Fuṣūṣ* is a synopsis of Ibn 'Arabī's

¹ *Tamhīd al-Qawā'id*, written by Ṣā'in al-Dīn ibn Turka has been studied in the theological seminaries of Tehran and Isfahan. Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī writes that Agha Muḥammad Reza Qomshā'i, one of the preeminent teachers of gnosticism, taught the text several times and himself studied it under Sayyid Rezā Larijānī.

² Shaykh Ḥasanzāda Āmūlī recommends that this text should be studied before Qayṣarī's commentary on the *Fuṣūṣ* given that it has one of the most thorough discussions of the Being, which is the subject of Qayṣarī's first chapter in the *Muqaddima*. Although these four books comprise of the basic texts of theoretical gnosticism, Shaykh Ḥasanzāda includes *Sharḥ Ishārāt* of Tūsī, *al-Asfār* of Mullā Ṣadra and his own work *Sirḥ al-'uyūn fī sharḥ al-'uyūn* on spiritual psychology (*ilm al-naṣf*). See "Ḥāmil al-Asrār" of Ṣamadī Āmūlī, a short pamphlet discussing the curriculum for students of the rational and gnostic disciplines.

doctrine, which he expands in *Futūḥāt al-Makkīyya*, Qayṣarī's *Muqaddima* can be read as a summary of the *Fuṣūṣ* itself.

Qayṣarī writes in a separate introduction to the *Fuṣūṣ* that without comprehending all of the essential topics of gnosticism, it is not possible to understand the original text of the *Fuṣūṣ*. It is in light of this approach that he wrote the *Muqaddima*, which contains what he considers to be the fundamental issues in gnosticism, such as Being, the divine names, prophethood, unveiling, and the human being.

In recent times, Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī has written a comprehensive commentary on the *Muqaddima*, treating it as an independent work and establishing it as a primary source for mystical doctrines. Āshtiyānī's commentary is a philosophical exposition of the school of Ibn 'Arabī, in which he often incorporates the views of the other major Islamic philosophical schools: Peripateticism, Illuminationism, and the Transcendent Wisdom of Mullā Ṣadra. In this way, Āshtiyānī's *Sharḥ-i muqaddima-yi Qayṣarī bar fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, serves as an excellent sourcebook for mystical doctrines within the larger context of Islamic philosophy.

DĀ'UD AL-QAYṢARĪ

Sharaf al-Dīn Dā'ūd al-Qayṣarī was born in the central Anatolian town of Kayseri (Qayṣarīyya), around 660/1260 and died in 751/1350. He was a disciple of 'Abd al-Razzāq Kāshānī (d. 736/1335) in Kāshān, with whom he studied *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, and who was at the same time his spiritual preceptor on the path (*ṭarīqa*).³ Although there is no entry on Qayṣarī in 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī's hagiography *Nafahāt al-uns*, Zayn al-Dīn Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ra'ūf al-Mūnawī (d.1031/1621) mentions him in his *Irgḥām awliyā' al-shaytān bi dhikr manāqib awliyā' al-Raḥmān* as follows:

[Dā'ūd al-Qayṣarī was] the scholar given to religious devotion, the ascetic Sufi (*al-'ālim al-'ābid*) who used to partake in spiritual struggle (*al-zāhid al-ṣūfī al-mujāhid*).

³ Zarrīnkūb, A. *Donbāl-ye dar tassawuf-e irān*, 132.

He studied the religious disciplines in his hometown and then went to Egypt and studied the three religious disciplines with the scholars versed in them. He studied intensely and became accomplished in the intellectual disciplines (*wa bara'a fī l-funūn al-'aqlīyya*). Then he occupied himself with Sufism, excelling in and mastering it and devoting himself to writing about it. He commented upon the *Fuṣūṣ* and attached an introduction to it in which he finely explains the principles of Sufism. Sulṭān Orkhān b. 'Uthmān [Orhan Gāzī] built a religious school for him in the town of İznik, which was the first one built in the Ottoman Empire. He died in the eight century [ah].⁴

Qayṣarī's Introduction to his commentary on the *Fūṣūṣ* is of particular importance in the study of mysticism both because of his clear and lucid style as well as his mastery of the ideas of Ibn 'Arabī. Āshtiyānī writes in his introduction, "We have compared Qayṣarī's commentary with those of other commentators, and found Qayṣarī's to be the best in many respects, even if Kāshānī's is more profound."⁵ Similarly, just as it can be said that Qūnawī's style of exposition of Ibn 'Arabī's ideas was more organized and clear than that of the master himself, given the abstruse nature of Ibn 'Arabī's voluminous writings, Qayṣarī's commentary is erudite, yet accessible. Furthermore, Āshtiyānī maintains that the *Muqaddima* is the best of Qayṣarī's writings.⁶ For this reason, Qayṣarī's commentary and introduction has become an instructional text studied in the classical learning centers as well as

⁴ Zayn al-Dīn Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ra'ūf al-Mūnawī, *Irghām awliyā' al-shaytān bi dhikr manāqib awliyā' al-Raḥmān (al-Ṭabaqāt al-ṣuḡhrā)*, ed. Muḥammad Adib al-Jādir, v. 4 (Beirut, 1999), 284; cf Mohammad Rustom, "Dā'ūd Qayṣarī: Notes on his Life, Influence and Reflections on the Muḥammadan Reality", *Journal of the Ibn 'Arabī Society*, V. XXXVIII (2005), 52.

⁵ Āshtiyānī, *Sharḥ-i muqaddima-yi Qayṣarī bar fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, 56.

⁶ Other works by Qayṣarī include a commentary on Ibn Fārīd's mystic poem, several treatises compiled by Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī entitled *Rasā'il-i Qayṣarī*, *Tahqiq mā' al-ḥayāt*, *Kashf asrār al-zulām*, *Nihāyat al-bayān fī dirāyat al-zamān*, *Inshā' al-dawā'ir*, *Risālat fī 'ilm al-ḥaqā'iq*, *Risālat fī 'idāḥ ba'd asrār Ta'wīlāt al-Qur'ān li'l-Kāshānī*, and his own commentary of the *Fuṣūṣ* called *Maṭla' khuṣūṣ al-kilām fī sharḥ ma'āni fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*. See *Sharḥ al-Qayṣarī ala tā'iyat ibn al-Fārīdh*, (Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya: 2004).

in private circles.

Numerous scholars attest to Qayṣarī's mastery of Ibn 'Arabī's doctrine and consider him to be a great scholar of this discipline. This is on account of both his ability to communicate philosophical and mystical doctrines as well as the fact that he was himself an accomplished gnostic, which may be considered one of the most important qualifications for the exposition of a mystical treatise. In the opening paragraph of the *Muqaddima*, Qayṣarī acknowledges to be the recipient of gnostic visions. He also relates that he studied the *Fuṣūṣ* with Kāshānī with others among his students when he became the object of divine assistance. He mentions,

I was singled out amongst my companions to have received knowledge and perceive meanings without prior reflection and learning.

Since gnosticism is fundamentally a practical discipline, and the gnostic's foremost concern is spiritual wayfaring, it can be said that it appears as a theoretical discipline only as an elaboration of the visionary experience and as a mode of communication to others.

Though not to discount the important function of theoretical gnosticism in establishing the correct understanding of metaphysical principles, it can be argued that these principles are derived for the most part from gnostic perception, and not discursive reasoning, even if they appear in the form of philosophical arguments.

Qayṣarī's exposition simply brings to light the experience of the gnostics in the language of the philosophers. It is an attempt to reconcile their experiences in the terminology and world-view of the philosophers—given that philosophy is the closest discipline to mysticism—and is not an attempt to arrive at the truth solely by means of the intellect.

For this reason, it is necessary to establish Qayṣarī, first and foremost as a gnostic, and secondarily as an original thinker or philosopher in order to lend credence to his exposition of the *Fuṣūṣ*. Were it not for his stature as an accomplished gnostic, it would not have been possible to present a credible commentary on a text whose very source is gnosis.

OUTLINE OF THE MUQADDIMA

The *Muqaddima* is divided into twelve sections, each addressing an important topic in the field of Sufism. A brief outline of the original text is as follows:

The first chapter, as Qayṣarī mentions, furnishes philosophical proofs for divine unity and other issues readily found in works of theology and philosophy. This is mainly to establish the philosophical foundations of divine unity according to the Sufis and to bring to light some differences from the other schools.

The second chapter comprises of a discussion of the divisions of the names and attributes including positive and privative, the names of Majesty and Beauty, the Keys of the Unseen and the difference between the names of the Essence, attributes and acts. Furthermore, concepts relating to the divine names, their engendering, the universal and particular, their dominion, governance, and their relationship with other names will be discussed.

The third chapter contains an exposition of the Immutable Archetypes and other divine realities such as contingent quiddities that are manifestations of the divine names. This chapter investigates the appearance of various levels of manifestation and the presence of the divine Essence in everything. In the commentary there is a discussion of God's knowledge and its relation to the created world.

The fourth chapter is a discussion of substance and accident according to the gnostics. Substance is defined as the Essence and accidents are defined as the divine names and attributes.

The five divine planes of existence or "presences" are discussed in the fifth chapter along with an introduction to the concept of the Perfect Human (*al-insān al-kāmil*), which is the fifth plane. The commentary will discuss the concept of the Perfect Human, as well as the concepts of the First Intellect and the descending degrees of creation.

The sixth chapter discusses the properties of the Imaginal World (*al-ʿālam al-mithāl*). The levels of unveiling are introduced as well as the terms Throne, Footstool, seven heavens, earths and angels.

The seventh chapter discusses the various degrees of unveiling and the difference between unveiling and revelation.

The eighth chapter investigates the relationship between the microcosm and macrocosm, both of which are the form of man, the manifestation of the Supreme Name or the Muḥammadan reality.

The ninth chapter explores the concept of the Muḥammadan Reality and its relationship to the reality of the other prophets.

The tenth chapter discusses the Supreme Spirit, which is none other than the reality of man. Qayṣarī also discusses the various levels of man's spiritual constitution.

The eleventh chapter discusses how the spirit returns on the Day of Resurrection through the governing effect of some divine names over others.

The twelfth chapter discusses the reality of prophethood and Spiritual Guardianship (*wilāya*). Qayṣarī expounds on these two concepts from the point of view of the gnostics, which is an expression of the dominion of the divine names and their governance. The difference between prophet, messenger and saint is also addressed.

THE COMMENTARY

In recent times, the *Muqaddima* of Qayṣarī has been taught on a number of occasions in the theological learning center in Qum. One can find in the libraries of the seminary a complete course consisting of audio recordings on the *Muqaddima* by contemporary scholars such as Ayatullah Jawādī Āmulī, Ayatullah Ḥasanzāda Āmulī, both of whom are students of the late 'Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī.

In the tradition of Islamic scholarship, classical texts were transmitted from teacher to student who would then carefully transcribe his notes to preserve every word of his teacher. For this reason it was not uncommon for a student to present a complete commentary of a text with little or no textual references since his work was seen as a continuation of a lineage of transmission. In many ways, it was sufficient to have studied with an eminent teacher as the primary qualification for teaching or expositing a particular work.

It is noteworthy that mystical works were not in the traditional discourse of the religious institutions but have become, in recent times,

increasingly popular and surprisingly accessible, given that only a generation ago they would have been studied only in private sessions for initiates on the mystical path.

During my time as a student in Qum, I had the good fortune of studying the *Muqaddima* with Shaykh Akram al-Mājid, the preeminent sage and gnostic. As a scholar he is erudite, articulate, astutely analytical, integrative in all of his teaching and extremely prolific as a writer and thinker. He is imbued with the highest ethical qualities, possessing gravity of bearing, graciousness and humility.

In addition, I have benefitted immensely from Professor Hamid Algar, to whom I am profoundly indebted for my academic training and moral edification over the years and for persistently guiding me throughout the translation and commentary.

In my commentary I have relied on my notes from the lectures of the *Muqaddima* delivered by Shaykh al-Mājid and Ayatullah Jawādī Āmulī, and from the text of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī, which exhaustively explores major themes in mystical thought, providing lucid explanation of difficult passages and a general framework for the organization of ideas. The rationale for choosing these three scholars as my primary sources is that they exemplify the contemporary exposition of a theoretical Sufi text in Islamic learning centers today. Each scholar from whom I have benefited possesses a unique expository style and a particular mode of transmission. I have attempted to coalesce each of their styles and incorporate some of their views in my commentary.

The study also turns to other exponents of this tradition, namely, Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī, Najm al-Dīn al-Rāzī, Mullā Ṣadrā, and Ḥakīm Tirmidhī, employing both Arabic and Persian sources as well as studies in English.

Āshtiyānī's commentary compares the views of the other schools of philosophy, using Qayṣarī's text as a point of departure to exposit many doctrinal issues in Shī'ism. Jawādī Āmulī, an eminent philosopher and Qur'ānic exegete, approaches the text discursively, emphasizing the philosophical nuances of Ibn 'Arabī's metaphysics, as evidenced in the audio recordings of his lectures.

Shaykh al-Mājid, alongside his intellectual approach, emphasizes the practical dimension of gnosticism, or spiritual wayfaring. The

simplest articulation of the spiritual way is self-knowledge through contemplation, remembrance, and purification of the soul. Once the heart is awakened, its inward faculties are then able to perceive spiritual meanings through reading the divine signs. Thereafter, those signs, which are essentially divine manifestations, intensify and one moves from reading the signs in existence and in the self, to embodying the divine names rooted in everything. When the spiritual nature overcomes corporeal nature, the intellect illuminated by the lamp-niche of prophecy, guides the human being, stage after stage, in the degrees of the soul, so that the heart is adorned with virtuous attributes, reflects divine perfections and becomes aware of divine mysteries. In the final stage, the spirit becomes immersed in the ocean of divine unity, moved by the divine hand and in harmony with the divine will, returning to its Lord and having fulfilled its purpose in every realm.

The present work introduces the first English translation of this indispensable text in the study of mysticism, drawing attention to some of the most fundamental ontological and epistemological issues in Islamic thought. I hope to convey as faithfully as possible the erudition of past and present masters who have inherited and contributed to an enduring tradition.

What follows is a parallel English-Arabic edition of Qayṣarī's *Muqaddima*. The Arabic text corresponds with Ḥasanzāda Āmulī's edited manuscript of Qayṣarī's *Sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al ḥikam*, published in Qom, Iran, 1378 H. A detailed commentary of each chapter follows in the second section with selective coverage of important ideas that Qayṣarī discusses.

AN EXCERPT OF JALĀL AL-DĪN ĀSHTIYĀNĪ'S INTRODUCTION TO MUQADDIMMA QAYṢARĪ

The subject of mysticism (*irfān*)⁸ is the most sublime of all the disciplines for which the divine philosophers have given the following reasons: The nobility and value of any discipline is in proportion to its comprehensiveness. Any discipline that sets the foundation and principles of another discipline is considered more valuable and nobler than the latter, since the subject of the lesser discipline is based on the principles and arguments set forth in the higher discipline. That is why philosophy, which discusses the very nature of existence, is considered a more noble discipline than mathematics, which discusses quantities, which are essential accidents of existence. Similarly, the science of music is considered dependent and subsidiary to the science of mathematics.

Qayṣarī defines the subject, principles, and issues of mysticism as such, “The subject of this discipline is the unitary Essence, eternal qualities, and everlasting attributes. It is the discipline that discusses the emergence of multiplicity from the unitary Essence of God, and its return to the Essence. Furthermore, it discusses the manifestation of the divine names, the methodology of wayfaring of the people of God, their practices and disciplines, the outcome of their efforts, and the result of their actions. Thus, it can be said that the subject of this discipline is God, Almighty, and His relation with His creation.”

The principles of this discipline consist of the divine names and attributes. They can be divided into three types, names of the Essence, names of the attributes and names of the acts. The names of the Essence are those that refer to the Essence of God since their governance is comprehensive, such that other names are subsumed under them. For example, the Attributes of Life, Knowledge, Power, Will, Light, Oneness, Necessity, etc., fall under this category.

⁷ Āshtiyānī, *Sharḥ-i muqaddima-yi Qayṣarī bar fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, 99.

⁸ A term derived from the Arabic *maʿrifa*, which denotes, deep understanding or esoteric knowledge. The usage is common in the Shīʿī mystical tradition, perhaps to disassociate with some of the Sufi orders of dubious legitimacy.

The reason for their being considered the names of the Essence is due to their being one with the Essence in the sense that other names, as well as the creation are not taken into consideration when contemplating them. They refer to the Degree of Singularity (*al-aḥadiyya*), which excludes any kind of multiplicity, and do not take into consideration their referents.

Some of the names of the Essence possess entification (*al-ta'ayyun*), but are witnessed from behind a veil for the virtuous. While the foremost of the wayfarers and perfect gnostics witness them from without any veils whatsoever. Some names of the Essence are not entified and hidden in the Unseen, as mentioned by the Prophet (p), "O Allah, I ask you by the names by which You have named Yourself, and revealed in the Book, and taught to the those among Your servants, or have reserved for Yourself in the knowledge of the Unseen."

As mentioned before, the worth and nobility of any discipline is in accordance with its comprehensiveness. Another criterion for the classification of the disciplines is in light of the subject that is studied. Since the subject of medicine is the human body the worth and nobility of the science of medicine is in accordance with the worth of the human body.

Whereas, since the discipline of mysticism studies the existence of God, His names and attributes and the perfection of the human being, naturally it ranks as the foremost in nobility and importance. It may be argued that the subject of theology is also the existence of God, His names and His acts, the origin and the resurrection of man, why has it not been placed as the foremost discipline?

The answer is that mysticism not only studies the existence of God and His attributes, but also the method by which the wayfarer acquires perfection through attainment to God, which is the very purpose of knowledge and the highest aim for man.

Mysticism is not only a theoretical discipline but also a spiritual way that describes the very path the wayfarer must take for his perfection, which lies in servitude and devotion to God.

AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

*In the Name of God
Most Beneficent, Most Merciful*

All Praise be to Allah, who specified the Archetypes with the ancient, Most Holy Effusion, determining them through His knowledge in the Unseen of His Essence, completing them by sprinkling upon them the light of manifestation. He graced and manifested them from the hiding place of the Unseen and the abode of non-being through the Keys of the treasures of bounty and generosity. He bestowed and granted each one of them what their capacity allowed. Thus, He brought into existence the possible entities and decreed their manifestation in the raiment of the divine names, arranging them through His wisdom, perfecting and establishing them. So glory be to Him who manifested to His Essence by His Essence. He brought forth Adam, appointed him vicegerent over the manifestation of His names, characterized by the world. He summarized and concealed in him every reality so that he would be the form of His comprehensive name, the Glorified, the Generous, the bearer of the secrets of the Most-knowledgeable, disclosing Himself by it, so he would come to know.

Blessings upon the one who is the Greatest Name, who speaks from the station of, "I am the master of the children of Adam," who was sent with the message to the best of nations; and, upon his progeny, his chosen companions from among the Arab and the non-Arab, those who lifted the curtains of darkness through their lights; and their inheritors from among the perfected saints, the wayfarers to the path, those having awareness of Truth by way of mysteries and wisdom.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله الذي عَيَّن الأعيان بفيضه الأقدس الأقدم، وقَدَّرها بعلمه في غيب ذاته و تَمَّم، و لَطَّف برشُّ نور التجلِّي عليها و أنعم، و أظهرها بمفاتيح خزائن الجود و الكرم، عن مكامن الغيوب و مقارَّ العدم، و وهب لكل منها ما قبل استعداده فأكرم، و أوجد منها ما كان ممكنا، و أحكم بإظهار ملابس أسمائه في القدم، و دَبَّرها بحكمته فأتقن و أبرم. فسبحان الذي تجلَّى بذاته لذاته، فأظهر آدم، و استخلفه على مظاهر أسمائه المنعوتة بالعالم، و أجمل فيه جميع الحقائق و أبهم، ليكون صورة اسمه الجامع العزيز الأكرم، و حامل أسرار العليم الأعلم فيدلُّ به عليه فيعلم.

و صلَّى الله على من هو الاسم الأعظم الناطق بلسان مرتبته «أنا سيّد ولد المبعوث بالرسالة إلى خير الأمم، و على آله و أصحابه المصطفين من العرب و العجم، الرافعين بأنوارهم أستار الظلم، و على وارثيه من الأولياء الكمّل السالكين للطريق الأمم المطّلعين بالحقّ على الأسرار و الحكم.

Thereafter, the weak servant, Dā'ūd bin Muḥammad bin Muḥammad al-Rūmī al-Qayṣarī says: Allah gave me success in both worlds when He unveiled for me the lights of His secrets, lifted the curtain from the vision of my heart, aided me with divine assurance and the communication of His symbols and granted everlasting success by the bestowal of His treasures. Providence allowed me to be at the service of the perfected master, authority, sage and mentor, unique in his time, unparalleled in his era, the pride of the gnostics, the apple of the eye of the monotheists, the light of verifiers, the epitome of the creed, truth and religion, 'Abd al-Razzāq Jamāl al-Dīn abī'l-Ghanā'im al-Qāsānī—may Allah sustain those who benefit from his blessed breaths, illuminate the hearts of his students and companions through gnosis of Him.

A group of brethren were busy in attaining perfection, seeking the secrets of the Possessor of Majesty and Beauty when he [Kāshānī] began the exposition of *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, which was given by the Prophet, peace and blessings upon him, to the perfected Shaykh, the reviver of the creed and truth—may Allah be pleased with him.

The Real had enlightened me of meanings possessing brilliant luminosity and inspired me of significances containing lofty mysteries. He showed me in my inner secret the bearer of good tidings who would inform me to my gnosis of this book. I was singled out among my companions to have received knowledge and acquire meanings without prior reflection and learning. It was assistance from Allah, the Generous, and a grace from the merciful Lord because He affirms by His support whomever He wills from among His servants, forging success in the mystery of his origin and return.

Since the knowledge of these mysteries are dependent on the knowledge of the tenets and principles that are agreed upon by the exponents of this group, I set out to explain its chapters and elucidate its principles that are built on the principle of Oneness, to which this path is attributed. One whom God has granted success and blessed with understanding may know most of the principles of this discipline. Thus, I have explained them in twelve chapters.

وبعد، فيقول العبد الضعيف داود بن محمود بن محمد الرومي القيصري مولداً الساوي محتداً، أنجح الله مقاصده في الدارين، فلماً وفّقنى الله تعالى و كشف علىّ أنوار أسرارهِ، ورفع عن عين قلبي أكنّة استاره، و أيدني بالتأييد الرباني باعلام رموزه، و التوفيق الصمداني بإعطاء كنوزه، و ساقطني الأقدار إلى خدمة مولانا الإمام العلامة الكامل المكمّل، وحيد دهرهِ، و فريد عصرهِ، فخر العارفين، قرّة عين ذات الموحّدين، و نور بصر المحقّقين، كمال الملّة و الحقّ و الدين، عبد الرزّاق بن جمال الدين أبى الغنائم القاساني، أدام الله على المستفيدين بركة أنفاسهِ، و أنار بمعارفهِ قلوب الطالبين و جلاّسهِ.

و كان جملة من الإخوان المشتغلين بتحصيل الكمال، الطالبين لأسرار حضرة ذي الجمال و الجلال، شرعوا في قراءة كتاب «فصوص الحكم» الذي أعطاه النبي، صلى الله عليه و سلم، الشيخ الكامل المكمّل، محيي الملّة و الحقّ و الدين، رضى الله عنه.

و كان الحقّ قد أطلعني على معانيهِ المتساطعة أنوارها، و الهمني بفحاويهِ المتعالية أسرارها، و أراني في سرّي من بشرني بمعرفتي هذا الكتاب، و خصصني بالعلم به من بين ساير الأصحاب، من غير تأمل سابق فيه، أو مطالعة و استحضار لمعانيهِ، عنايةً من الله الكريم، و فضلاً من الرب الرحيم، لأنّه هو المؤيّد بنصرهِ من يشاء من عباده، و الموفّق بالظفر على أسرار مبدئه و معاده.

و لما كان العلم بهذه الأسرار موقوفاً على معرفة قواعد و أصول اتفقت عليها هذه الطائفة، قدمت لبيانها فصولاً، و بيّنت فيها أصولاً، تبتني قاعدة التوحيد عليها و تنتسب هذه الطريقة إليها، بحيث يعلم منها أكثر قواعد هذا العلم، لمن وفقه الله تعالى و أنعم عليه بالفهم، و جعلتها اثني عشر فصلاً.